

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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INFO OAU CONFERENCE COLLECTIVE

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR, OAU, US

SUBJECT: US CREDIBILITY ON UPSWING

REF: STATE 134061

1. RECENT WEEKS HAVE SHOWN ENCOURAGING EVIDENCE OF IMPROVED US CREDIBILITY IN AFRICA IN WAKE OF POLICY INITIATIVES OF NEW ADMINISTRATION. BRIEFINGS OF VARIOUS GOVERNMENTS ON NAMIBIA HAVE REVEALED CONSIDERABLE SUSPICION OF SOUTH AFRICAN MOTIVES, BUT EVEN LEAST SYMPATHETIC INTERLOCUTORS HAVE TENDED TO CREDIT WESTERN FIVE WITH GOOD INTENTIONS IN THEIR EFFORT TO ACHIEVE NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT. SIMILARLY, CONVERSATIONS HERE WITH DELEGATES FROM VARIETY OF COUNTRIES HAVE PRODUCED BORAD AGREEMENT THAT CARTER ADMINISTRATION HAS BROUGHT NEW HOPE TO AFRICA AND DESERVES CHANCE TO DEMONSTRATE WHAT IT CAN ACCOMPLISH BEFORE BEING SUBJECTED TO BARRAGE OF CRITICISM.

2. DRAMATIC EXAMPLE OF CHANGED ATTITUDE IS CONTAINED IN SPEECH DELIVERED TO OAU COUNCIL OF MINISTERS BY NIGERIAN UN PERMREP LESLIE HARRIMAN IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN
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OF UN APARTHEID COMMITTEE. AFTER RITUAL ATTACKS ON WESTERN POWERS FOR "SEVERAL MANEUVERS... TO BAIL OUT SOUTH AFRICAN REGIME BY GIVING IT RESPECTABILITY" AND ON "KISSINGER DIPLOMACY," HARRIMAN MADE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:
QTE THE CHANGE OF ADMINISTRATION IN THE US HAS BEEN AN IMPORTANT FACTOR-- THOUGH ONE SHOULD NOT PLACE EXAGGERATED HOPES ON PRESIDENT CARTER. HOWEVER VICE

PRESIDENT MONDALE'S STATEMENT AFTER HIS MEETING WITH VORSTER IN MAY WAS VERY POSITIVE. HE STRESSED FULL EQUALITY IN SOUTH AFRICA AND SAID THAT THERE MUST BE FORWARD MOVEMENT IN ALL THREE TERRITORIES-- RHODESIA, NAMIBIA , AND APARTHEID-- AND GAVE A CLEAR INDICATION THAT THE US WOULD TAKE CONCRETE MEASURES TO PRESS SOUTH AFRICA. THERE HAS BEEN A CLEAR US COMMITMENT TO MAJORITY RULE THROUGHTOUT SOUTHERN AFRICA. END QTE.

3. COMMENT: IN PRIVATE CONVERSATION, HARRIMAN REFERS WITH OBVIOUS PRIDE AND PLEASURE TO HIS COLSE WORKING RELATIONSHIP AND EVIDENT FRIENDSHIP WITH AMBASSADOR YOUNG, TO WHOM MUCH CREDIT IS UNDOUBTEDLY DUE FOR CONVINCING THIS NOTED CURMUDGEON AND CYNIC THAT WE MEAN WHAT WE ARE SAYING ABOUT AFRICAN ISSUES. STEIGMAN

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